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WHAT A CHILD'S MAGAZINE SHOULD BE

IN THE development of the idea and purpose of the publication of a child's magazine, there are two aspects of outstanding importance.

First in importance is the ethical or moral value to the child; second, its purely physical character. In my analysis, however, I shall reverse the places of these two points and take up the physical first, for without the *right material thing* it is not possible to present to the child the highest measure of ethical value—the senses must accept before the subtleties of appreciation can be stirred.

Format. Under this heading are the physical form, size, binding, page area, etc. Regarding format, we must first consider the impression made upon the senses of the child, and then follow the awakened interest this form produces.

For younger children, especially of the read-to period from three to seven, the book—or magazine—should be *comfortable* to handle and carry about; the paper should be good and of a moderate tone in color (cream or sepia-white is preferable). The margins about the text of pages and pictures should be ample and never "cropped" in appearance; in my reference to "ample margins," I wish to emphasize that the *abundance, space, and freedom* of a page serves to release the mental concepts of the child. Young eyes and minds must not be cramped or narrowed down. We believe that the violence of pure white paper, especially when covered with the black of type and the color of pictures, fails to record impressions as happily as a "toned" stock.

Type. This should be clear, well spaced, and openly leaded. In *John Martin's Book,* the standard width of the type page is 7x10 inches, set in two columns of 3¼ inches. The points of type should range from 18-pt. to 12-pt., thoughtfully selected to meet the needs of the child, as determined by scientific investigations; and references must be constantly made by the editors to established practices of educators of known experience.

Illustrations. These should be invariably well drawn with a central object in each illustration that specifically holds the child's mind to a concrete thought in the nearby or associated text. We believe that the "line-cut" makes the ideal illustration for children, and that it contributes more value to the child's mental experience than the "half-tone," which gives a blurred appearance to the area occupied by the picture, and leaves a hazy mental impression.

The child's mind naturally "fences in" its pictures; therefore it is wise to enclose the majority of illustrations in a border, or containing line.

Every effort should be made to assure drawings that are beautiful, but never "over-artistic"; by this I mean we should not illustrate for our children on purely modern lines that are mainly decorative, without illustrative value. We believe, however, that the occasional appearance of the modern illustration is valuable to the child as another mental adventure or discovery, thus adding to the child's cultural impressions. It may be readily seen that permitting an occasional experience in modernism opens up the capacity of "recognition" in later years.

All illustrations should skillfully follow the style, character, and beauty of artists or illustrators of standard or established place in art. We have trained our illus-

trators to follow Howard Pyle, Walter Crane, Flaxman, Greenaway, Crawhall, Durer, and masters of woodcuts. It can be readily seen that this insistence on good art must shape the child's taste and bring about a natural preference for the "refined" in picture and line, as well as a familiarity with better art standards.

We work to develop that magic called *taste!*

Color. The use of red, as instanced in *John Martin's Book,* is done with the obvious intention of stimulating the eye experience of the child. There is a certain value in the violence of red; its expressive influence is certain. Added to this, the use of red contributes to the artistic value of the book's ensemble, and to the child's physical feeling red adds a thrill of unconscious excitement which fixes subjective impressions.

There are many associated but minor comments upon format which might be added, but I believe the important necessities have been covered in the foregoing paragraphs.

Variety. In illustrations variety should be constant. Each issue of the magazine should retain uniformity of general idea, but upon study should provide constant change for both eye and mind. The whimsical and even bizarre is permissible, but never the gross or fear-awakening.

The "Feeling" of a Book. In *John Martin's Book* we immovably hold to the conviction that our magazine should be made to appear as much like a book as is consistent with post-office requirements. We, therefore, insist upon a monthly change of cover. We invariably give the child striking end-papers or frontispieces, always in two colors and highly decorative and imaginative. We insist upon a conventional Title Page and the expected Contents Page.

You will see that by doing this we give the child the repeated experience of getting the impression of a real book. Our object in this is obvious—we develop in the child mind a knowledge of and a respect for a real book.

Advertisements. You will note that no advertisements ever appear in the front sections of *John Martin's Book,* nor do we "jump" pages in completing editorial text.

Binding. The binding of this magazine, which goes to children from four to twelve years of age, is made very strongly durable and the magazine should open flat.

ETHICAL AND CULTURAL OBJECTIVE OF JOHN MARTIN'S BOOK

Text. The magazine material should be absolutely free from all suggestions of fear, vulgarity, insidious mischief, death, and killing. The policy should be immovable in perpetrating in print only those ideas and ideals that shape good taste, humor, reverence, and confidence in the publishers.

Therefore, in this magazine there should be embodied a wide gamut of moral and cultural influences. Each issue should, as far as possible, specifically put into concrete form stories, narratives, pictures, and verses that suggest the above given objectives.

The English should be as nearly perfect as experience and care can make it. In vocabulary and sentence length, usage should conform to the best pedagogical standards for the various grades. The editors of *John Martin's Book* refer constantly to the Thorndike Vocabulary and keep before them all late and approved School Readers of varying grades.

Happiness. The magazine should give a first impression of *pure happiness* and then a sense of personal proprietorship in it. Therefore, its whole tone should be human, friendly, and unsentimental. It is by the holding of the child's confidence in this magazine that its greatest influence is exerted.

Morals. The morals, or lessons to be absorbed, should never be conveyed by

preachments or unhappy endings or punishments. The child's love and confidence being established, any morality and any refinement may be naturally impressed upon the child's forming mind.

Contents. The contents of such a magazine should be as varied as its physical appearances, and fundamentally cultural and "tactfully moral." Every alert effort, however, must be observed to keep the cultural or moral objective out of the child's conscious sense; therefore, the work of producing such a magazine is replete with constant subtleties of approach and suggestion. To gain the attention and hold the loyalty of the child to the purpose of this book all wise means are used to attract the eye, to engage the fancies, and to direct subconscious growths to a fearless, frank, and fine objective development. A year's adventure of the child through twelve issues of such a magazine should be intensely absorbing and broadly cultural.

Advertising. Regarding the commercial side of a magazine, all advertisements should be so pictured and expressed as to retain the refinements, merriment, and attractions of the main body of the book.

John Martin's policy for his magazine in relation to advertisements has been so exacting as to practically exclude many sources of income. That which makes for highest right for the child regardless of business interest and profit, is John Martin's immovable standard.

It will, therefore, be noted that in *John Martin's Book* the advertisements are comparatively few. This is partially due to the fact that the editors refuse to print any paid-for space in the magazine that would directly or indirectly be out of harmony with the spirit of the magazine; also, because a preponderance of advertising pages could not be permitted in *John Martin's Magazine,* which aims to exert the influence of a good book.

Finally. I do not ask you to look upon *John Martin's Book* as a pedagogical plan, for these pedagogical ideals and accomplishments should naturally come by way of the school and through the trained abilities of the teacher. Our magazine is merely a human link between the teacher's ideals and the cultural and moral influences that life should bring to the child's experience at home.

JOHN MARTIN.

SOME USABLE TECHNIQUES FOR THE SELECTION OF CURRICULUM MATERIALS

THE greatest need of any teacher is that of an adequate educational philosophy. The selection of curriculum materials, the setting up of educational objectives, the choice of methods to be used in the classroom, the attitude which one has toward one's task and toward one's pupils all grow out of one's philosophy of education. Nor is it sufficient to make the formulation of such a philosophy the subject of formal study. This is excellent so far as it goes, but it must always be supplemented by those conclusions and those lessons which come out of a rich and varied experience—as a teacher, yes—but far more, as one who has discovered something akin to the real meaning of life itself.

The curriculum of all educational institutions is—or should be—a process of constant change. In its very nature it demands that no solidifying, no stereotyping of subject matter should take place. It is characterized above all things by being in a "state of flux," thus permitting an immediate adaptation to all the devious and tortuous paths which it may be called upon to traverse in being assimilated into the nature of the individual. The term itself means "little race," and I take it that the race referred to here is none other than the race of life, *i. e.,* the sum total of the experiences which make up an individual's career. "Let us run with patience the race that is set be-